



SEPTEMBER 2010 EDITION

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Salina Human Relations

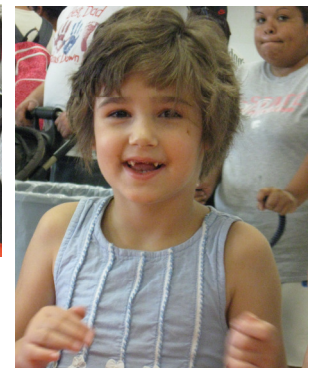
“ ... with liberty and justice for all.”

THE MISSION OF THE SALINA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION IS TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AND TO ESTABLISH EQUALITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL PERSONS WITHIN THE CITY OF SALINA THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT, ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION.

Back-to-school fair provides teaching moment

In addition to providing a tremendous community service by giving away 1,000 backpacks and school supplies to Salina families, the annual back-to-school fair also gives various local agencies a chance to pass on information about vital services.

The Salina Human Relations Department took part in the event, which was Aug. 6 at Lakewood Middle School, by giving away rulers, bookmarks and other items with information on topics such as fair housing, fair employment and lead paint dangers.



ADA gives 'mom & pops' a break

By **Gina McDonald**
Director, SHRC

Occasionally we receive letters in the office with no return address or signature. Typically, we cannot address the concerns, because we do not know the details. However, we received a concern regarding accessibility and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that we can answer.



Gina McDonald

This issue concerns the accessibility of "The Scheme" and "Coop's Pizzeria."

For those of us who worked on passage of the ADA, I have to chuckle a bit at this question. I am not laughing at the fact that the writer could not have access to the entrance or to the restrooms to the restaurants, but because this issue was a classic argument for voting against the ADA. "We" the disability rights

advocates, were going to close down all the "mom and pop" pizza stores in the country.

One of the many misunderstood requirements of the ADA is the accessibility of existing, small locations. As was indicated in the anonymous letter, the Scheme has been in place since 1978, prior to the passage of the ADA.

The requirement would be that they make entrances accessible if it is "readily achievable." That phrase means that it would be inexpensive and without much difficulty. Due to the location of the entrance, it would be very difficult to put a ramp in at the Scheme. The ramp would have to intrude out on to the sidewalk where people would likely trip and fall. The restrooms would be expensive to make accessible as well.

Therefore, for locations like the Scheme, the rule is that they have "program or service accessibility." Since their main service is pizza, they may be required to

deliver the pizza to the curb for a qualified person with a disability. That is the extent of their requirements for now. You can call ahead and pick up a pizza.

If they were to make renovations to the restaurant, they may have further obligations regarding path of travel and the restrooms, but until that occurs, they have no further obligations.

If you have further questions regarding the ADA, please feel free to e-mail or call me at the address on the newsletter.

You also always have the option of going to the City of Salina website, www.salina-ks.gov. On the left hand side, under the City of Salina, a flashing icon says; "Have a Problem? Get it Fixed. Click here to create a Citizen Service Request." You may leave your name or remain anonymous.

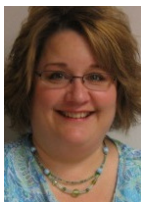
The City of Salina is very committed to accessibility for all citizens.

You can e-mail Gina at
gina.mcdonald@salina.org.

New job presents new challenges, perspectives

By **Miki Orr-Muths**
Administrative Assistant, SHRC

I'm Miki Orr-Muths. I began working in the Human Relations Department the first of April as the administrative assistant. Some people may think that April Fools Day is not the best day to begin a new career, but I have realized there is nothing to joke about when it comes to helping someone who has been discriminated against.



Miki Orr-Muths

I was not aware of all the different aspects of this small office. Besides myself there are only four other people in the department. I have been welcomed by my coworkers and we have settled in to create a cohesive team. I had the pleasure of working with the

director, Gina McDonald, in the past and I was thrilled to have the chance to work with her again.

I have learned many things in five months of being a part of this team. April started off with a bang being Fair Housing Month. The team held numerous seminars to generate awareness and education for landlord/tenant issues.

Prior to working here, I was not aware of the information that the Human Relations Department offers for landlords and tenants. Every day, we have someone come into the office for help regarding these issues. Most of the questions and concerns are not of a discriminatory nature, but our staff will take the time to help someone and give them information on the Fair Housing laws and provide the necessary forms from a 30-day eviction notice to a standard lease.

One of my job duties includes taking notes for the Human Relations Commission and the Accessibility Advisory Board (AAB). I am always impressed with the honest concern and attention the commissioners have with the issues we face in the community. The commission is very interested in ways to address discrimination and how to educate or create awareness of differences in our population in Salina. The AAB also takes a genuine interest in city activities.

I have not only learned my new job duties, but I am becoming very aware that what a person says or how they act can be very powerful. Every person has a choice to interact with someone in a positive or a negative way when relating to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, age or familial status. I choose to be the one who is positive.

Calendar of Community Events

Sept. 2: First Thursday Art Rush: Access Art Gallery, 215 N. Ninth, Deborah Eckart, illustration; ArtXpressions, 113 E. Iron, Autumn Splendor, Mary Ann Tanking, painting, Bob Helling, photography, Sally Fiedler, pen and ink; The AVON Store, 134 S. Santa Fe, Suite 100, Rex McKinney, drawing and acrylic painting; Bergen's Sculpture Studio, 320 N. Santa Fe, Ron Michael ceramics; ETC, 113 B S. Santa Fe, Maria Vega Carter, jewelry and décor from natural materials; Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, 120 W. Ash, Sculpture Tour Salina (pioneer piece of project unveiled at 4:30 p.m.); Salina Art Center, 242 S. Santa Fe, Artist Exchange; Salina Public Library, 301 W. Elm, RoJean Loucks, harpist, and Anne Nye, photography; Smoky Hill Museum, 211 W. Iron, the colorful, sometimes dangerous and often overlooked people and places of Salina, presented by John Burchill, 5:30-6:30 p.m.; Thiessen-Elise, 134 S. Santa Fe, Suite 110, Craig Hinca, painting, live music by Cash Hollistah; Visual Voices Library, 901 Beatrice, Angel Reyes, spray paint artist.

Sept. 8: Media workshop at Community Access TV, area media professionals will train you to be a better spokesperson for your organization.

Sept. 14: Salina Human Relations Commission monthly meeting, 5:30 p.m., Room 105, City-County Building, public is invited.

Sept. 14: League of Women Voters "Lunch & Learn" event with City Manager Jason Gage and County Administrator Rita Deister discussing the current state of the city and county budgets, Salina Public Library's Prescott Room, 12:15-1:15 p.m.

Sept. 17-18: Girl Scouts' Rolling Hills Overnight Adventure (take a flight to Australia's outback without leaving the zoo), for grades 4-5, 7 p.m. Sept. 17 to 9 a.m. Sept. 18, cost: \$25, call 827-3679.

Sept. 18: Salina NAACP annual block party, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Church of the Cross, 1600 Rush St., giveaways, games, music, free food, bingo, prizes.

Sept. 18: Free prostate screening, 8-11 a.m., Tammy Walker Cancer Center, appointments are required by calling 452-7335 no later than Sept. 15 and space is limited.

Sept. 19: NAACP-Salina monthly meeting, 3 p.m., Salina Art Center, 242 S. Santa Fe, public is invited.

Sept. 23: Girl Scouts' On-Time Skate Party, for grades K-12 and adults, 5:30-7:30 p.m., cost: \$8.

Sept. 25: Dream Act March, beginning at Walnut & Santa Fe at 2:30 p.m., rally to follow at 3 p.m. at Caldwell Plaza.

Sept. 25: Free child safety seat checks, 1-4 p.m., Bennett Autoplex, 651 S. Ohio.

Oct. 9: Hispanic Health Fair, 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Oct. 9, Friendship Center, 746 Commanche.

Visit our online calendar at
www.human.salina.org